THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • THURSDAY • JANUARY 08, 2026 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 22 • LATE CITY EDITION

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU

NARENDRA MODI

MODI, NETANYAHU DISCUSS GAZA, TIES

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday spoke with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on phone, with the latter briefing him on the implementation of the Gaza peace plan. Both leaders reiterated their commitment to combating terrorism and strengthening the India-Israel strategic partnership | P11

WHITEFIELD HORROR

Neighbour kidnaps, kills 6-year-old girl

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

A six-year-old girl was allegedly kidnapped and murdered by her migrant neighbour over a trivial dispute with her family. The victim's body was found dumped in a drain near Nallurahalli in the Whitefield police limits around midnight on Tuesday. The victim was said to be from West Bengal. The accused, Yusuf Meer, a scrap collector, has been arrested. The families of the victim and Yusuf, all daily-wagers, were neighbours in Pattandur Agrahara.

The police said the girl was not to be seen on Tuesday noon and her parents filed a complaint. A probe was launched to trace the child. Later in the night, her body was found packed in a sack in a drain on Temple Road in Nallurahalli.

Yusuf kidnapped the girl on Tuesday around 11 am as he was angry with her parents. He allegedly strangled her to death using a nylon rope and dumped her body in the drain, the police said. It is said that a quarrel broke out recently between the girl's mother and Yusuf over a trivial issue and he had allegedly threatened the family. When the girl went missing, the victim's family suspected his role. As Yusuf was absconding, he was traced and nabbed.

"No injury marks were found. Autopsy report is awaited. The motive is yet to be ascertained," the police said.

Economy to grow at 7.4% in FY26 despite tariff heat

Govt's first advance estimate says services sector will drive growth

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

INDIA's economy is pressing ahead amid external challenges, including punitive US tariffs, with the GDP projected to grow at 7.4% in the current financial year (FY26), government data released on Wednesday showed.

The first advance estimate by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) pegged the GDP growth in FY26 at 7.4%, up from 6.5% in the previous year. It is also better than RBI's estimate of 7.3%, indicating the economy has not only surmounted the obstacles to growth but also emerged stronger.

The growth is propelled by the robust performance of the services sector, which saw a 9.1% growth in real gross value added (GVA). Within services, the financial, real estate & professional services and public administration, defence & other services segments recorded a remarkable 9.9% growth at constant prices, data showed.

Industrial sectors also performed better than expected with the manufacturing GVA in real terms growing at 7%, higher than 4.5% in the previous year. The secondary sector, comprising manufacturing and construction, is estimated to grow at 6.6% compared to 6.1% in the previous year, indicating steady industrial activity.

The primary sector—agriculture and mining—showed moderation, with growth at 2.7% in real GVA terms compared to 4.4% last year.

On the expenditure side, private consumption is expected to grow at 7% compared to 7.2% in the previous year. Investment, as reflected in gross fixed capital formation, is estimated to rise 7.8% compared to 7.1%.

"India's growth momentum has sustained despite elevated global uncertainty due to tariff tensions, riding on accommodative monetary and fiscal policies, robust corporate balance sheets, and favourable developments such as above-normal monsoons and low crude oil prices," said Dharmakirti Joshi, chief economist, Crisil.

Meanwhile, nominal GDP is projected to grow at 8% in FY26, reaching ₹357.14 lakh crore. This is lower than the budget estimate of 10.1%. "The lower nominal GDP growth has implications for GoI's gross tax revenues (GTR). In the first eight months of the current fiscal, the realised growth of GTR was 3.34%. The relatively lower nominal growth combined with a relatively lower than budgeted buoyancy of 1.07 over the revised estimates of 2024-25 may result in lower revenue in 2025-26 than the budget estimates," said D K Srivastava, chief policy advisor, EY India.

MoSPI said a revision of the national accounts base year from 2011-12 to 2022-23 is underway, which may lead to updates in subsequent estimates.

The second advance estimates for FY26 will be released on February 27, 2026.

Unholy Maha micro pacts embarrass BJP, Cong

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI
@ Mumbai

UNHOLY micro level political alignments became a major talking point after Maharashtra's recent local body polls, embarrassing the BJP and the Congress leaderships.

At the Akot Nagar Parishad, the BJP joined hands with Owaisi's AIMIM to cut the Congress and Prakash Ambedkar's party out of the power matrix. In Ambernath, the BJP did a deal with the Congress to keep its NDA partner Shiv Sena led by Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde out of power.

In Ambarnath, Shinde's Sena was the single largest party with 23 councilors, BJP followed with 14, Congress had 12 and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's NCP 4. Yet, BJP's Tejshashree Karanjule got elected as president because of the opportunistic alliance called Ambarnath Vikas Aghadi. The local BJP unit defended it, saying it was against the corrupt Sena, which was running Ambarnath for 20 years.

Akot, too, threw up a hung house with the BJP on 11, Congress 6, AIMIM 5 among others. The BJP formed the Akot Vikas Manch with the support of 23 councilors, including AIMIM.

After public outcry, state BJP president Ravindra Chavan issued the show cause notice to its Akot unit. As for the Congress, it expelled its 12 corporators in Ambarnath and dissolved the local unit.

ICL
ICL Fincorp
GOLD LOAN @ 7.5 PAISE
MONTHLY INTEREST RATE PER ₹ 100
LOW INTEREST RATE
HIGH VALUE | EASY PROCESSING
TOLL-FREE : 1800 31 333 53

EXPRESS READ

3 workers die, 5 hurt in B'gavi boiler accident

BELAGAVI: A tragic industrial accident at Inamdar Sugar Factory near Marakumbi in Belagavi district killed three workers and left five others injured on Wednesday. The incident occurred during repair work on a 40-foot-high vessel used for boiling cane juice. Eyewitnesses said the workers screamed in agony as the scalding water fell on them P6

Kogilu mess: FIR filed against 4

MOHAMMED YACOOB @ Bengaluru

IN the latest development related to the contentious land at Kogilu, a first information report (FIR) has been registered at the Yelahanka police station against four persons for allegedly collecting money and let families build houses illegally at Kogilu village on Survey Number 99. Two of the accused are Muni Anjinappa, and Robin, while two others, Waseem Ulla Baig and Vijay, were arrested, said DCP Northeast GK Mithun Kumar.

The FIR was registered based on a complaint filed by Santosh Kaddi, a senior engineer with the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited(BSWML) on January 4. The complaint mentions that the government land was sold fraudulently and unauthorised construction of houses was facilitated at Fakeer Layout in Kogilu, which is in the Bengaluru North City Corporation limits.

The complaint stated that the land, measuring 14.36 acre, was transferred to the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) in 2015. The civic body wanted to put up a bio-methanisation plant, animal rendering unit, sanitary waste unit and waste processing units. CONTINUED ON P2

HDFC
MUTUAL FUND
BHAROSA APNO KA
LARGE, MID OR SMALL?
MULTI CAP FUND
IS FOR ALL!
Scan to learn more
about Multi Cap Funds
SIP for life
An open-ended equity scheme investing across large cap, mid cap & small cap stocks
Exposure across many sectors/industries
Suitable for long-term investors
An Investor Education and Awareness Initiative
SIP - Systematic Investment Plan | Visit https://www.hdfcfund.com/information/key-know-how to know more about the process to complete a one-time Know Your Customer (KYC) requirement to invest in Mutual Funds. Investors should only deal with registered Mutual Funds, details of which can be verified on the SEBI website (www.sebi.gov.in/intermediaries.html). For any queries, complaints & grievance redressal, investors may reach out to the AMCs and / or Investor Relations Officers. Additionally, investors may also lodge complaints directly with the AMCs. If they are not satisfied with the resolutions given by AMCs, they may raise complaint through the SCORES portal on https://scores.sebi.gov.in/. SCORES portal facilitates investors to lodge complaint online with SEBI and subsequently view its status. In case the investor is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaints raised directly with the AMCs or through the SCORES portal, they may file any complaint on the Smart ODR on https://smartodr.in/login.
For more information contact MFD/RIA | Learn about SIPs: hdfcfund.com/sip
Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.